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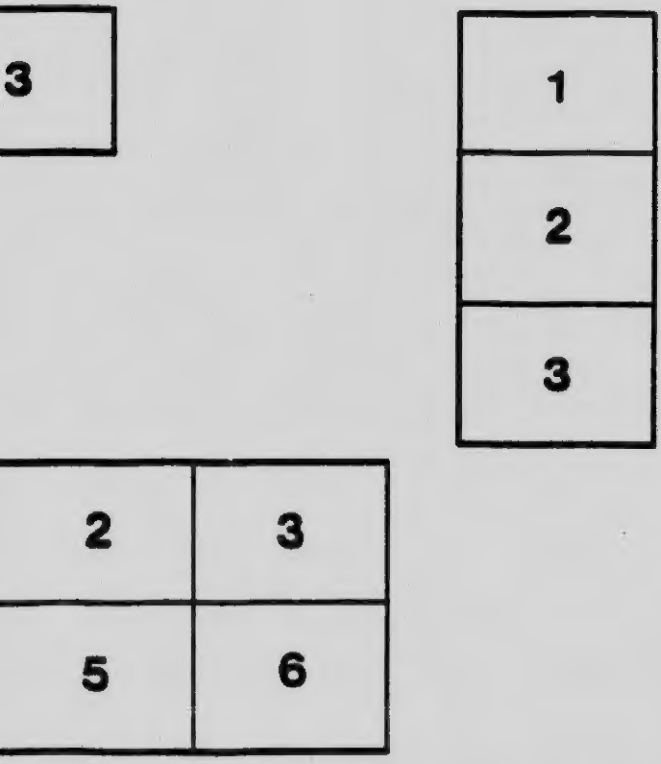

CANADA AND THE NAVY

ANSWERS TO IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

What are the Views of the Other Self-Governing Dominions of the British Empire?

WHICH POLICY SHOULD CANADA ADOPT?

THE CONSERVATIVE POLICY—An immediate expenditure of $35,000,000 on three dreadnoughts as part of a permanent policy of centralization and contribution.

THE LIBERAL POLICY—A Canadian Naval Service in accordance with the unanimous resolution of the House of Commons of March, 1909.

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of the
Canadian Liberal Party, Ottawa, Canada

(Leaflet No. 2)

QUESTION—What are the views of the other self-governing Dominions of the British Empire?

ANSWER—

The debate in the Canadian House of Commons on Mr. Borden's proposed contribution of an expenditure of $35,000,000 for 3 battleships to be at the disposition of the British Admiralty, **has caused other outlying Dominions of the British Empire to ask whether a deliberate attempt at centralization is not being made and whether behind Mr. Borden's proposals the real object is not to deprive the self-governing Dominions of the right of establishing naval services of their own** in co-operation with the other naval forces of the Empire.

Mr. Borden's words in the House of Commons on Feby. 27th have occasioned alarm to all the self-governing Dominions and **the impression is becoming general that Mr. Borden is really acting on behalf of a group of Empire reorganizers, and that the Liberal party in Canada,** in fighting to have a Canadian Naval Service established instead of the adoption of a policy of contribution, **is championing the cause of all the self-governing Dominions.** One phrase in particular in Mr. Borden's speech has given rise to serious misgivings. **"We say that if we are to remain an Empire, we cannot have five foreign policies and five separate navies".** This each one of the self-governing Dominions has taken as **an attack upon autonomy and self-government.**

Nothing could be clearer and more fearless than the utterances of the leading Statesmen of the outlying Dominions in **protest against a scheme of centralization** which affects all alike.

AUSTRALIA PROTESTS AGAINST BORDEN'S PLAN OF CENTRALIZATION AND CONTRIBUTION

Sir George Reid, High Commissioner of Australia, in the course of a speech before **a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute in London on March 11th** expressed the opinion that the **Australian policy of having its own naval service, operating in conjunction with the British fleet, was an example that must be eventually followed by all self-governing Dominions.**

On March 2nd Lord Denman, the Governor General of Australia, opened a naval college at Geelong, Australia. In declaring the Institute opened, **the Governor General stated that the occasion afforded a further proof that the Australian people intend to own and man their own war ships** in an effort to carry out the programme laid down for them by the British Admiralty at a recent Conference.

Senator Pearce, the Australian Minister of Defence, on the same occasion said that the Australian government had its mind made up that while building its navy it would not confine it efforts to building ships alone, **it was fully realized that the country should also undertake to man as well as build them.** He declared that Australia was doing her utmost to add **a new centre of strength to the British Empire.**

On Feb. 26 the Australian Commonwealth authorities in London issued the text of an important statement made by Senator Pearce, the Australian Minister of Defence, in which the Minister refers to the decisions arrived at during the Conference of 1909 when **Canada and Australia each agreed to organize naval services of their own,** and points out that **the Australian agreement is the only one that has been carried out.** He says that **the Australian scheme for a fleet unit did not originate with the Australian government of the day, but with the British Admiralty.** The Minister of defence concludes, "our policy is known and has the approval of the admiralty. We are **hopeful the three countries may yet fall into line** for the purpose of promoting unity of action."

NEW ZEALAND PROTESTS AGAINST BORDEN'S PLAN OF CENTRALIZATION AND CONTRIBUTION

Hon. Col. Allen, Minister of Defence for New Zealand, gave expression to the New Zealand point of view, **at a meeting of the Empire Parliamentary Association in London, March 13th, at which he said that the payment of a naval subsidy would not, in the long run, appeal to the Dominion sentiment of patriotism.** A permanent policy was needed, but this could hardly be said to exist under the Canadian (i.e. Borden) or New Zealand Schemes. They needed a permanent policy and one which would endure. **What they wanted was a living thing in which the Dominions would have a vital interest.** It did not matter so much for the moment where Dreadnoughts were built; that could be arranged as conditions developed in the future. What did matter was that it should be realized that **the Dominions would not be content with merely putting their hands into their pockets.**

The Dominions must have the opportunity of doing their duty towards the personnel of the fleet and manning the Empire's ships at sea. They must be prepared to help, not only the Imperial fleet with material, but **they must have an interest in the operations of the fleet itself.**

Views similar to those of the Australian Minister of Defence were given expression to by **Sir Joseph Ward, the former Prime Minister of New Zealand.** In an address before the meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute at which Sir George Reid spoke, Sir Joseph Ward said he agreed with Sir George that **"It was impossible that any self-governing dominion would consent to return to the old system of government under central authority."**

SOUTH AFRICA PROTESTS AGAINST BORDEN'S PLAN OF CENTRALIZATION AND CONTRIBUTION

The views of South Africa were clearly set forth in the House of Assembly at Cape Town on March 4th when Major Silburn moved that the government should consider the advisability of submitting without delay proposals to the House for a contribution annually by the Union of South Africa to the British Navy. **General Botha the Prime Minister** objected to this resolution and **stated that it was impossible to bind South Africa to an annual contribution, which**

would not be the best form of assistance to the Imperial Government. He thought that possibly South Africa might wish to have a small navy in its own waters, and if they went on those lines they would see good effects.

Mr. Merriman, a leading member of the Assembly, in the course of the same debate **stated that he thought Canada had embarked on a dangerous course in having a Minister residing in London who was to be a sort of partner to be dragged into the policy of Great Britain and its warlike enterprises.** He could not imagine a more mad and insensate policy for a young country.

IMPERIAL UNITY AND LOCAL AUTONOMY MUST GO TOGETHER.

While the self-governing Dominions have given expression in this frank and open manner to their opposition to any policy of contribution based upon an idea of centralization in naval affairs, they have not deemed it necessary to assert that their loyalty to the British Empire could not be challenged. As a matter of fact, **with the growth of self-government, the self-governing Dominions have become more strongly attached to the British Crown.** Imperial unity and local autonomy have gone together.

The Rt. Hon. James Bryce, British Ambassador at Washington, made this very plain in **a speech before the Canadian Club at Ottawa on March 9th** in which referring to his recent visits to New Zealand and Australia, he said, "Both in Australia and New Zealand there has been of late years a very marked, palpable growth of the sentiment of Imperial unity. The spirit of Imperial unity which prevails in Australia and New Zealand has taken shape there, as it has here, in the desire to make **arrangements for common defence** with the United Kingdom, and there also they are considering what they will do for **co-operation** with the Imperial navy."

The real question at issue in Canada today is whether the British Empire is to be strengthened by Canada's adhering to the policy of self-government by the adoption of a naval service of her own, or whether Canada by entering upon a policy of contribution is to adopt a course opposed to that which all the other self-governing Dominions regard as best, and which is certain to lead to strained relations between this Dominion and the mother country,

British subjects who love Canada and the British Empire will do their utmost to see that the policy which Canada adopts is the one unanimously agreed to by both political parties in the Canadian parliament in March, 1909; a policy which is endorsed by the other self-governing Dominions; a policy which demands the speedy organization of a Canadian Naval Service."

Copies of this leaflet may be had on applying to the Central Liberal Information Office Ottawa, Can

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